



## Drought Update

### Thursday, November 12, 2015

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#### **KEY ACTION ITEMS FROM THIS WEEK**

- **Governor Declares Tree Die-Off Emergency:** On October 30, Governor Brown [declared](#) a state of emergency citing the worst epidemic of tree mortality in modern history. California's four year drought and resulting native bark beetle infestation has led to the death of millions of trees on federal, state and private land, with millions more trees currently dying. The [proclamation](#) directs state and local agencies to remove dead or dying trees in hazardous areas that threaten power lines, roads and other infrastructure. In addition, request for federal action to reduce risks by providing funding to augment state resources, deploy technical assistance and redirect U.S. Forest Service funds to remove trees on federal lands.
- **Statewide Conservation Exceeds Target for Fourth Consecutive Month:** On October 30, the State Water Board [announced](#) that Californians exceeded the 25 percent conservation mandate for the fourth consecutive month. According to the State Water Board, residents reduced water use by 26.1 percent statewide or 53.8 billion gallons in the month of September. Cumulative statewide savings since June 1 is 28.1 percent, which equates to 253.4 billion gallons or 65 percent of the overall goal of saving 1.2 million acre-feet by February 2016. For more details, view the State Water Board's full press release [here](#).
- **State Water Board Sets December 7 Workshop on Next Steps for Conservation Regulations:** On November 9, the State Water Board [announced](#) a public workshop on December 7 in Sacramento to gather input on potential extension and modification of the emergency conservation regulations set to expire in February 2016. The emergency regulations were adopted in May 2015 and require urban water suppliers to meet state-mandated conservation targets ranging from 4% to 36%, compared to 2013 water use. The workshop will include presentations on various precipitation scenarios and actions for the coming months.
- **State Water Board Invites Comments on Storm Water Strategy:** On November 6, the State Water Board began accepting [public comment](#) on the proposed [Storm Water Strategy](#), an effort to optimize the management of storm water resources. This strategy was developed after receiving stakeholder input during an August workshop and is intended to direct future improvements to the Storm Water Program by identifying goals, objectives, and projects that can manage storm water more effectively to improve both water quality and water supply, and increase the value of storm water as a resource.
- **DWR Webinar to Discuss SB 13 and Formation of Groundwater Sustainability Agencies:** On November 12, the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) will be hosting a [webinar](#) to discuss implementation of SB 13, which added clarifications and requirements to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). SB 13 will become effective starting January 2016. The webinar will cover the responsibilities for the groundwater sustainability agencies (GSAs), process of notification of DWR and GSA formation, and address issues related to boundaries and services area conflicts.

- **California's Water Conservation Education Program Campaign:** On October 30, Save Our Water released a [blog post](#) highlighting the fourth consecutive month California has exceeded the Governor's 25 percent Water Conservation Mandate, and re-emphasizes the need for ongoing conservation efforts through the winter. In addition, Save Our Water will be featuring Golden State Warrior stars, Steph Curry and Klay Thompson, in a new upcoming PSA. Lastly, Save Our Water continues to highlight their partnership with [California ReLeaf](#), and will be featuring the U.S. Forest Service as this month's Water Hero on the [Save Our Water website](#).

In addition, there has been a continued push on the Save Our Water Rebate website on social media promoting the "[Claim your Turf Replacement](#)" rebate, and "[Claim Your Toilet](#)" rebate programs. For more tips and tools to help conserve water and keep trees healthy during the drought, please visit Save Our Water's website, which is available in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#), or connect with the program on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#).

- **Governor's Drought Task Force:** The Task Force continues to take actions that conserve water and coordinate state response to the drought. During the November 5 meeting, the Task Force announced the last two regional DTF meetings are scheduled for November 12 in San Luis Obispo and in Sacramento/Yolo County on November 17.

## **ONGOING DROUGHT SUPPORT**

- **Emergency Food Aid, Utility and Employment Assistance:** The Department of Social Services (CDSS) Drought Food Assistance Program (DFAP) provides food assistance to affected communities that suffer high levels of unemployment from the drought. To date, over 983,380 boxes have been provided to community food banks in drought-impacted counties, with an average of approximately 13,250 food boxes per week since June 2014. Approximately 886,759 boxes of food have been picked up by 464,947 households.

Food boxes distributions vary by county and occur 1-4 times per month. Nearly 60% of the food distributions have occurred in the Tulare Basin (Fresno, Kern, Kings and Tulare). There are 12,600 boxes scheduled for delivery for the week ending November 13 to Fresno, Kern, Kings, Riverside, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Tulare counties.

The Department of Community Services and Development (CSD) allocated an additional \$600,000, under the federally-funded Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), to continue the [Drought Water Assistance Program \(DWAP\)](#) which provides financial assistance to help low-income families pay their water bills. As of October 30, CSD has reported that a total of \$570,299 has been issued to 2,837 households.

CSD is in the process of allocating \$400,000, under CSBG, to continue the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW) drought assistance program, which provides assistance in employment training and placement services to individuals impacted by the drought. This program provides employment training and placement services to migrant and seasonal farmworkers suffering job loss or reduced employment due to the drought. To date, CSD has reported that a total of \$103,112 has been issued to the Center for Employment Training, California Human Development, Central Valley Opportunity Center, Center for Employment Training and Proteus with 48 participants enrolled.

In response to California's historic drought, CSD has received \$7.5 million in General Fund to implement the Drought Emergency Assistance Program (DEAP) to provide emergency relief and support services to drought-impacted individuals and their families and households. As of October 30, CSD has reported that a total of \$2,425,988 has been issued to 1,845 households.

- **Drought Response Funding:** The \$687 million in state drought funding that was appropriated last March through emergency legislation, as well as \$142 million provided in the 2014 Budget Act, continues to advance toward meeting critical needs. To date, \$468 million has been committed, and nearly \$625 million of the emergency funds appropriated in March came from sources dedicated to capital improvements to water systems. Since March, the Department of Water Resources has expedited grant approvals, getting \$21 million immediately allocated to grantees that were pre-approved for certain projects.

As planned in March, the next \$200 million of expedited capital funding was awarded in October, and the remaining \$250 million will be granted by fall 2015. The 2014 Budget Act appropriated an additional \$53.8 million to CAL FIRE over its typical budget to enhance firefighter surge capacity and retain seasonal firefighters beyond the typical fire season.

As a result of continuing drought conditions, emergency legislation was enacted in March 2015 that appropriated over \$1 billion of additional funds for drought-related projects and activities. The Administration's May Revision proposal includes an additional \$2.2 billion for programs that protect and expand local water supplies, improve water conservation, and provide immediate relief to impacted communities.

## **CURRENT DROUGHT CONDITIONS**

- **Recent Precipitation:** Over the weekend California received widespread precipitation with totals ranging from over 3 inches throughout the North Coast to hundredths in Santa Barbara. Snow has started to fall in trace amounts across the Sierra Nevada, while Southern California remains dry. The accumulation of rainfall in the regional areas for the Northern Central and Southern Sierra shows rainfall approaching the driest year on record in the North, just above average in the Central, and above the wettest year in the upper Tulare watersheds.

Below are precipitation totals (in inches) from October 30 through November 10, and year-to-date rainfall based on the water year cycle (October 1, 2015 to September 30, 2016).

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|---------------------------------------|--|
| • <b>Bakersfield:</b> 0.28" (0.42")   | • <b>Monterey:</b> 2.70" (2.84")         |
| • <b>Paso Robles:</b> 0.78" (0.84")   | • <b>Redding:</b> 0.45" (0.72")          |
| • <b>Fresno:</b> 1.02" (1.51")        | • <b>Riverside:</b> 0.22" (0.38")        |
| • <b>Yosemite:</b> 2.95" (6.16")      | • <b>Sacramento:</b> 1.18" (1.30")       |
| • <b>Los Angeles:</b> 0.00" (0.45")   | • <b>San Diego:</b> 1.15" (1.58")        |
| • <b>Stockton:</b> 1.48" (1.69")      | • <b>Mount Shasta:</b> 0.44" (0.96")     |
| • <b>San Francisco:</b> 0.80" (0.80") | • <b>South Lake Tahoe:</b> 1.84" (3.11") |
- **Fire Activity:** Since the beginning of the year, firefighters from CAL FIRE and the U.S. Forest Service have responded to over 8,069 wildfires across the state, burning 824,499 acres. Fire activity across California remains high with nearly 234 combined wildfires in just the past two weeks.

- **CAL FIRE Burn Suspension Status:** Due to cooler temperatures and recent rains, CAL FIRE has lifted the burn suspension in the State Responsibility Area in Northern California and portions of Central California, allowing residential outdoor burning of landscape debris with a permit.

CAL FIRE continues to monitor weather conditions closely and has the ability to increase staffing should the weather conditions change or if there is a need to support wildfire activity and any other emergencies in the State. For additional information on preparing for and preventing wildfires, please visit <http://www.readyforwildfire.org/>.

- **Dry Well Reports:** With California at the end of its fourth year of a severe, hot drought, the Governor's Drought Task Force continues to monitor and identify communities and local water systems in danger of running out of water. Over the summer, a cross-agency team, led by DWR, developed a new system that improves and streamlines data collection and reporting for [household water shortages](#) for California water systems with fewer than 15 household connections.

As of November 4, approximately 2,617 wells statewide have been identified as critical or dry, which affects an estimated 13,085 residents. Cal OES has reported that 2,470 of the 2,617 dry wells are concentrated in the inland regions within the Central Valley. If you are experiencing a water supply shortage, please [submit a report](#) on DWR's website.

- **Vulnerable Water Systems:** The State Water Board continues to provide technical and funding assistance to several communities facing drinking water shortages, and is monitoring water systems across the state. Since January 2014, 101 out of the 139 projects approved to receive emergency funding for interim replacement drinking water have been executed.

On May 19, the State Water Board adopted Guidelines for administering the latest emergency drought appropriations of \$19 million announced this past March. To date, the State Water Board has received requests for \$5.9 million of those funds.

- **Projected Reservoir Management:** Since the last report on October 30, Central Valley reservoirs from Shasta and Trinity in the North to Isabella in the South had a net loss in storage of 73,427 acre-feet (AF) with a total gain of 10,898 AF and a total loss of 76,887 AF. Shasta Reservoir decreased by 28,101 AF, while San Luis Reservoir, an off-stream reservoir for the Central Valley Project and State Water Project, decreased its storage by 4,199 AF. Oroville Reservoir recorded 1,014,072 AF on October 29 with a 10-day average reduction in storage of 3,013 AF/day. Folsom Reservoir recorded 150,071 AF on October 29 with a 10-day average reduction in storage of 918 AF/day.

[Reservoir Levels](#) as of November 9 remain low, including: Castaic Lake 32% of capacity (43% of year to date average); Don Pedro 32% of capacity (49% of average); Exchequer 7% of capacity (15% of average); Folsom Lake 15% of capacity (29% of average); Lake Oroville 28% of capacity (46% of average); Lake Perris 36% (46% of average); Millerton Lake 33% of capacity (84% of average); New Melones 11% of capacity (20% of average); Pine Flat 12% of capacity (35% of average); San Luis 18% of capacity (33% of average); Lake Shasta 30% of capacity (51% of average); and Trinity Lake 20% of capacity (31% of average). An update of water levels at other [smaller reservoirs](#) is also available.

- **Weather Outlook:** A low pressure system will move inland Tuesday with showers ending from the northwest during the morning and with gusty west winds continuing for the mountains and deserts into the afternoon. Dry and warmer conditions are expected for the remainder of the week with periods of gusty northeast winds near the coastal foothills. Cooler temperatures with a return of onshore flow are forecasted for Sunday and Monday as a trough of low pressure moves inland through California.

## **Local Government**

- **Local Emergency Proclamations:** A total of 62 local Emergency Proclamations have been received to date from city, county, and tribal governments, as well as special districts:
  - **28 Counties:** Butte, Colusa, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Inyo, Humboldt, Kern, Kings, Lake, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Modoc, Plumas, San Bernardino, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Shasta, Siskiyou, Sonoma, Stanislaus, Sutter, Trinity, Tulare, Tuolumne, and Yuba.
  - **13 Cities:** City of Live Oak (Sutter County), City of Lodi (San Joaquin County), City of Manteca (San Joaquin County), City of Montague (Siskiyou County), City of Porterville (Tulare County), City of Portola (Plumas County), City of Ripon (San Joaquin County), City of San Juan Bautista (San Benito County), City of Santa Barbara (Santa Barbara County), City of Rancho Cucamonga (San Bernardino County), City of West Sacramento (Yolo County), City of Willits (Mendocino County) and the City of Fort Bragg (Mendocino County).
  - **9 Tribes:** Cortina Indian Rancheria (Colusa County), Hoopa Valley Tribe (Humboldt County), Karuk Tribe (Siskiyou/Humboldt Counties), Kashia Band of Pomo Indians of the Stewarts Point Rancheria (Sonoma County), Picayune Rancheria of Chukchansi Indians (Madera County) Sherwood Valley Pomo Indian Tribe (Mendocino County), Tule River Indian Tribe (Tulare County), Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation (Yolo County), and Yurok Tribe (Humboldt County).
  - **12 Special Districts:** Carpinteria Valley Water District (Santa Barbara County), Goleta Water District (Santa Barbara County), Groveland Community Services District (Tuolumne County), Lake Don Pedro Community Services District (Mariposa Stanislaus County), Mariposa Public Utility District (Mariposa County), Meiners Oaks Water District (Ventura County), Montecito Water District (Santa Barbara County), Mountain House Community Service District (San Joaquin County), Nevada Irrigation District (Nevada County), Placer County Water Agency (Placer County), Tuolumne Utilities District (Tuolumne County), and Twain Harte Community Services District (Tuolumne County).
- **Water Agency Conservation Efforts:** The Association of California Water Agencies (AWCA) [has identified](#) several hundred local water agencies that have implemented water conservation actions. These water agencies [are responding to the drought](#) by implementing conservation programs, which include voluntary calls for reduced water usage and mandatory restrictions where water shortages are worst.

ACWA [released](#) a Drought Response Toolkit to assist water agencies as they take action to meet state-mandated water conservation target and communicate information about water use restrictions, enforcement and other issues with their customers, media and other audiences.

- **County Drought Taskforces:** A total of 33 counties have established drought task forces to coordinate local drought response. These counties include: Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Humboldt, Kern, Kings, Lake, Madera, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, Monterey, Napa, Nevada, Orange, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento, San Francisco, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Siskiyou, Stanislaus, Solano, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Tulare, Tuolumne, and Yolo.
- **Tribal Taskforce:** A total of 7 tribes have established drought task forces to coordinate tribal drought response. These tribes include: Hoopa Valley Tribe (Humboldt County), Hopland Tribe (Mendocino County), Karuk Tribe (Siskiyou County), La Jolla Band of Luiseno Indians (San Diego County), Sherwood Valley Tribe (Mendocino County), Trinidad Tribe (Humboldt County), and Yurok Tribe (Humboldt and Del Norte County).

#### **DROUGHT RELATED WEBSITES FOR MORE INFORMATION**

##### **[Drought.CA.Gov](#): California's Drought Information Clearinghouse**

State's Water Conservation Campaign, [Save Our Water](#)  
Local Government, [Drought Clearinghouse and Toolkit](#)

California Department of Food and Agriculture, [Drought Information](#)  
California Department of Water Resources, [Current Water Conditions](#)  
California Data Exchange Center, [Snow Pack/Water Levels](#)  
California State Water Resources Control Board, Water Rights, [Drought Info and Actions](#)  
California Natural Resources Agency, [Drought Info and Actions](#)  
State Water Resources Control Board, Drinking Water, [SWRCB Drinking Water Program](#)  
California State Water Project, [Information](#)

[U.S. Drought Monitor](#) for Current Conditions throughout the Region  
[U.S. Drought Portal](#), National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS)  
National Weather Service [Climate Predictor Center](#)  
USDA Drought Designations by County [CA County Designations](#)  
USDA Disaster and Drought Assistance Information [USDA Programs](#)  
U.S. Small Business Administration Disaster Assistance Office